



Montgomery County Council

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Councilmember Valerie Ervin Celebrates Reopening of Fenton Street Market

On Sat., April 28, Market Returns to Downtown Silver Spring

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ROCKVILLE, Md., April 27, 2012—Montgomery County Councilmember Valerie Ervin, one of the Council's strongest advocates for local, small businesses, on Saturday, April 28, will help celebrate the return of the Fenton Street Market (FSM) to downtown Silver Spring as the market reopens for spring. Ceremonies celebrating the return of the market will be held at 10 a.m. at One Veterans Plaza at the intersection of Fenton and Ellsworth streets.

This year, FSM is expected to welcome more than 60 vendors each week offering original artwork, handmade and imported crafts, antiques, jewelry, furniture, vintage clothing and services. The Fenton Street Market operates directly across the street from downtown Silver Spring's FreshFarm Market that also is open on Saturday mornings.

The Fenton Street Market will operate from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. every Saturday from April 28 through Oct. 27. It will not be open on Aug. 11, Sept. 8 and Sept. 22.

"Veterans Plaza has become a hub for community activities," said Councilmember Ervin. "As the Council representative for Silver Spring, I have worked with constituents to ensure that the Fenton Street Market continued to operate in Silver Spring. I am so excited that the market has found a home at Veterans Plaza for at least three years. As a frequent visitor to the market, I am delighted to see its success."

Councilmember Ervin has advocated for small businesses since she was first elected to the Council in 2006. She secured funding to support local businesses in the County through the creation of a Local First Program, a nationally recognized effort that

emphasizes the importance of patronizing locally owned businesses and helps owners network and make collective purchases.

Last October, Councilmember Ervin asked the Council's Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee to review the County's Local Small Business Reserve program and extend the sunset date of that program. Small businesses are a critical component of the County's economy.

"In these difficult times, it is more important than ever that Montgomery County remains committed to an environment that supports economic growth and job creation," she said.

Throughout the redevelopment of downtown Silver Spring, Councilmember Ervin has looked to protect the area's established and new small business owners. She is a strong supporter of the Fenton Street Market and believes this type of market is an asset to the County.

"We have learned a lot of lessons in our redevelopment of downtown Silver Spring," she said. "One of the things we need to improve is our focus on promoting small homegrown businesses. The Fenton Street Market has positively impacted employment, income and commerce in ways that truly tapped the power of the Silver Spring community's diversity."

Since 2009, the Fenton Street Market team has worked hard to build the momentum to ensure a successful, local market, and it quickly became what some call a "small business epicenter." In 2010, the Fenton Street Market began weekly operation each Saturday.

The space has also become vibrant with civic engagement. In 2011, the Fenton Street Market was incorporated as one of the nation's first Benefit Corporations, a hybrid for-profit/non-profit business model for social entrepreneurs. This means that it is different from other markets in that the market's mission is to invigorate the economy with locally based, independent business and arts. The market also held community conversations each week, and included space for non-profits, such as Silver Spring Green, an organization that Councilmember Ervin helped form.

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